



State of Connecticut  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL  
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON VETERANS

Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Representative Green and honorable members of the Housing Committee. My name is Representative Theresa Conroy. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my support for H.B. 5583 which I proposed for consideration. I am grateful to the committee for granting this legislation a public hearing.

When I first learned that home health aides working in our housing authority were not subject to a criminal background check, I was shocked. As a nurse manager, in both the private and government sectors, all my nursing staff were subjected to criminal background checks.

H.B. 5583 would provide a screening tool that would directly impact our Public Housing Authorities, which house the elderly, the majority being frail, and the young disabled. Many of these senior buildings do have little or no security. The residents themselves are subjected to extensive screening including police background checks to be admitted into the housing. This is a tool used by the housing authorities to provide a safe environment. However, home health aides coming in to care for these same residents are not subject to the same background checks.

There has been a documented case where an aide has stolen from a resident in Seymour. Since proposing this legislation, I have received correspondence regarding incidents in other towns, such as Milford and Simsbury. I also received a letter from an attorney who stated that "This legislation could have helped one of my clients whose relative was victimized by a home health aide who had a prior criminal history."

In closing, this bill would help to protect our elderly and young disabled residing in housing authorities. It is our responsibility to ensure that we are doing all that we can to make sure that they are safe and free from worry in situations that can be avoided.